Students' Association
Film and Television Institute of India,
Law College Road,
Pune: 411004

Date – 18/08/2015

To,
Shri. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore,
Hon. Minister of State, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,
Government of India

Sir,

The students of the FTII write this letter to you with the utmost urgency and concern regarding their physical safety as well as their mental and emotional capacities being under intolerable duress. The events that transpired yesterday need to be brought to light and evaluated under the realities that the students of the FTII now must be engaged with.

Yesterday, the students made it clear that they would continue to sit with the director in his office until they convinced him to retract his decision to carry forward with the assessment or until he gave an acceptable academic explanation for the same. The discussions continued in good humour, with several faculty members also present, the students only repeatedly making it clear they would have to be answered.

At approximately 10:00 p.m, the police was officially called to intervene in the situation. Having not resorted to any form of violence or even intimidation the students considered this an unfortunate step, but again reiterated, even pleaded with the director that all they wanted was engagement, and him walking out without providing answers at this crucial juncture would take the students agony to an intolerable level.

The director then tried to exit the room, while the students found this to be an unacceptable time for him to exit, as it was so emblematic of the situation the government had put them in. The students formed a human chain, and continued to plead with the director to stay. The police then immediately intervened and attempted to pull and push the students out of the way, which resulted in a most chaotic situation and this proactive physical manhandling and violence from the police forces resulted in the breaking of the glass of the director's office and in injuring several students.

Afterwards, the situation was made to simmer down, and the Director walked out of the office, and was made to address the larger student and media community assembled outside. When asked if he could justify the drastic actions taken by the ministry regarding the assessment and their interference in academia OR even the 5 questionable appointments, the Director in front of the gathering clearly said that he had no answer. Further, he announced that the assessment would be put on hold until today, until he had a conversation with the ministry, regarding this most immediate crisis.

The students requested the director to call an emergency Academic Council meeting to address the issue of the assessment, if the ministry and administration are indeed seriously interested in solving any of the institute's issues, and not just in trying to break the strike with these unacceptable interferences.

The agony of the students has now reached a crescendo and this ensuing crises has reached it's zenith. The students vehemently feel that they have not been fairly engaged with even after more than 2 months of sacrificing their academic activity, and putting immense physical, emotional and

financial pressure on themselves. **This current situation is clearly not acceptable to the students and it is in that light that we still sincerely and most urgently invite the Hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting and the Hon. Minister of State to the FTII Campus to engage and interact with the students, hear out our concerns and together and immediately arrive at a solution that has evaded us so far.** It is clear that this current crisis cannot be allowed to continue any longer, and we look forward to arranging your amicable visit at the earliest possible time

Thanks,

Harishankar Nachimuthu
President
Students' Association, FTII

CC: Joint Secretary, Ministry of I&B, Government of India